

Q: What is Vote by Mail?

Vote by Mail means that every registered voter in the City of Rockville will receive a ballot packet by mail. The voter may vote by completing the enclosed ballot and returning the ballot in the postage-paid return envelope.

Q: Why is Rockville using Vote by Mail?

Our goal is to make it easier for everyone to vote by getting the ballots to you rather than having you come to the ballot.

Q: What are the important dates I should know?

September 8 – Candidate Filing Deadline

September 15 – Deadline to register and have a ballot packet automatically mailed

October 13 – Ballot packets will be mailed to all registered voters on or before October 13

October 16 – Accessible ballot marking device available at City Hall

October 17 – Deadline to register to vote

November 7 – Election Day! [Vote Centers](#) will be open from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

November 7 – Deadline to return ballots. All ballots must be received at [City Hall](#) by 8:00 p.m.

Q: Do I need to do anything to make sure I receive a ballot packet?

- Make sure you are [registered to vote, and your address](#) is current.
- [Verify that your Rockville address](#) is within the corporate limits of the City of Rockville.

Q: When are ballot packets mailed?

Your ballot packet will be mailed to you on or before October 13. Your ballot packet will include a ballot and a postage-paid return envelope. Follow the instructions that accompany your ballot.

If you are a registered voter and do not receive your ballot packet by October 20, contact us at 240-314-8286.

Q: How do I return my voted ballot?

After you receive your ballot packet in the mail, follow the included instructions to mark your ballot. To return your ballot, you may use one of the following options:

- Mail the ballot back using the postage-paid return envelope included with your ballot packet.
- Drop your completed ballot, sealed in your signed return envelope in any Election Drop Box. Outdoor drop boxes will be available 24 hours a day and will be located at:
 - City Hall – 111 Maryland Ave.
 - Montrose Community Center – 451 Congressional Ln.

Indoor drop boxes will be available during regular business hours and will be located at:
Lincoln Park Community Center – 357 Frederick Ave.
Rockville Senior Center – 1150 Carnation Dr.
Thomas Farm Community Center – 700 Fallsgrove Dr.
Twinbrook Community Center – 12920 Twinbrook Pkwy.

- A friend or family member can return your ballot for you.

Q: My spouse received a postcard. Why didn't I?

The City of Rockville sends out postcards to every registered voter in the City of Rockville. If you **did not** receive a postcard, please check to make sure that your address and voter registration are up to date. <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Elections/index2.html>

Registration

Q: What are the voter eligibility requirements?

To be eligible to vote in a City of Rockville election, a person must be:

- A citizen of the United States
- At least 18 years old on [Election Day](#)
- A resident of the City of Rockville. To find out if you are a resident of the City of Rockville (Not all Rockville addresses are in the City of Rockville) go to www.rockvillemd.gov/elections
- Registered to vote at your City of Rockville address

Q: Do I have to register to vote in Rockville if I'm already registered to vote in statewide elections?

No. If you are registered to vote in the State of Maryland at your City of Rockville address, you are automatically registered to vote in the City of Rockville election. Not sure if your Rockville address is in the City of Rockville? Go to www.rockvillemd.gov/elections

Q: Is it too late to register for this election?

The deadline to register to vote is October 17. You must be registered by September 15 to have a ballot packet automatically mailed to you. If you register after September 15, you can vote in person on Election Day at one of the Vote Centers. If you are not registered by October 17, Same Day Registration will be available at City Hall on Election Day.

Q: If I am not registered by Election Day, can I still vote?

Yes. Same Day Registration will be available at City Hall on Election Day. You will need to bring:

- Current, valid photo identification with your City of Rockville address
- or
- A copy of a current (dated within 3 months of the election) utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check or other government document that shows your **name** and **current Rockville address**.

Q: How do I register?

You may register:

- Online at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Elections/index2.html>
- [At the City Clerk's Office in City Hall](#) located at 111 Maryland Ave, Rockville, MD, 20850.
- [At the Montgomery County Board of Elections](#) located at 18753 N Frederick Ave #210, Gaithersburg, MD 20879.

If you register online or at the County Board of Elections, you will automatically be registered to vote in both statewide and City of Rockville elections. If you register at City Hall, you have the option of registering for both state and City of Rockville elections or city elections only.

Q: How can I find out if my Rockville address is in the City of Rockville?

Go to www.rockvillemd.gov/elections and enter your street address. Or you may call the Vote by Mail Hot Line (240-314-8286) or send an email (with your street address) to elections@rockvillemd.gov.

Important: A Rockville address only means that your mail is delivered by a Rockville post office. **Postal boundaries and city boundaries are not always the same.**

Q: Do I have to affiliate with a political party to vote in the election?

No. Rockville elections are non-partisan.

Q: What if I will be out of town?

- If you will be out of town and would like to have your ballot packet mailed to you at an alternate address, please [contact the Maryland State Board of Elections](#) to add an alternate mailing address to your voter registration.
- If you are going out of town, you can take your ballot packet with you and mail your completed ballot from anywhere in the U.S. using the postage-paid return envelope included in the ballot packet. For your ballot to be counted, it must be received by 8:00 p.m. on November 7.
- If you are moving within Rockville city limits, you must update your address on your voter registration by September 15. Ballot packets will not be automatically forwarded to a new address by using a U.S. Postal change of address form.

Security

Q: Is the voting system secure?

The voting system being used by the City of Rockville is the same system and equipment used by the State of Maryland for state and federal elections. Maryland's election systems are secure, have built-in redundancies, and have been subjected to security testing.

The City of Rockville is using a paper-based voting system. Accordingly, there is a paper record of every vote cast, and ballots can be re-tabulated if necessary. The voting equipment is **never** connected to the internet. The network used to generate official election results is **never** connected to the internet and, therefore, cannot be hacked. Physical access to the network is restricted and limited to election officials - all of whom have had a security background check - and all network transactions are logged. Documents showing the chain of custody are maintained.

Q: Will my ballot be processed securely?

Yes. It is essential to the integrity of an election that ballot processing be accurate and transparent, while maintaining your right to cast a secret ballot. After you return your voted ballot, the secure ballot processing center follows this ballot counting process:

1. The outer return envelope is checked to ensure the voter oath is signed by the voter named on the envelope.
2. You will be credited for voting in that election. This ensures that only one ballot from each voter is counted.
3. The outer return envelope, which identifies you, is then separated from your voted ballot. Your ballot cannot be traced back to you, ensuring the secrecy of your vote.
4. All ballots are inspected to make sure the tabulating machine will be able to read all votes. Tabulation equipment is tested before every election to make sure it is working accurately.

Q: Can I use my own envelope to mail in my ballot?

No. You must use the postage-paid return envelope we provide with the oath of the vote by mail voter on it. This voter oath must be signed for the ballot to count.

Q: Will my mail carrier be able to see my signature on the outside of the return envelope?

No. The return envelope includes a security flap that hides your signature. If you would rather not mail your ballot, you can deliver it to one of the drop boxes or Vote Centers.

Q: Can all the voters in my household return their ballots in the same envelope?

No. Each ballot must be returned in the provided postage-paid return envelope and each voter must sign the voter oath on the return envelope. The rule is one ballot, one envelope.

Q: Why not just let us vote by computer or smartphone?

Great question! The answer is one word: **Security**. While a lot of work is being done in this field, a safe, secure solution that ensures the secrecy of each vote and cannot be hacked is not available.

BALLOT

Q: How will I receive a ballot packet?

Your ballot packet will be mailed to the residential address listed on your voter registration record unless you have provided an alternate mailing address on your voter registration. Please confirm with the [Maryland State Board of Elections](#) that your address is correct on your voter registration to make sure your ballot packet gets to you.

Q: If I'm on vacation or have moved, will my ballot packet be forwarded?

No. Ballot packets will not be forwarded to your new address if you move or are temporarily away. If you have moved, you will need to update your address. If you are temporarily away, [you can provide an alternate mailing address](#) on your voter registration.

Q: When will I receive my ballot?

If you do not receive a ballot packet by October 20, contact us at 240-314-8286.

Q: How do I vote my ballot?

Mark your ballot by filling in the oval(s) next to your choice(s) using **black ink**.

If you make a mistake or want to change your selection, contact us at 240-314-8286 for a replacement ballot. Do not cross out or erase a vote made in error.

Insert your completed ballot in the postage-paid return envelope. Do not return another voter's ballot in your envelope.

Sign the voter oath on the outer envelope and seal the envelope.

Return your ballot by one of the following three methods:

- Mailing it back in the postage-paid return envelope provided.
- Placing it in a drop box.
- Casting your ballot in-person at a Vote Center on Election Day.

Q: What contests are on my ballot?

The contests are for Mayor and City Council. You may select one candidate for Mayor and up to six (6) candidates for City Council.

Q: What happens if I vote for more than one candidate for Mayor?

When more votes for an office are selected than are permitted, the votes will be considered an overvote and no votes will be recorded for that office. In this case, the remainder of your ballot that is valid will be counted.

Q: Will my ballot count if I choose not to vote for a certain contest or fewer than six candidates for City Council?

Yes. It will. You may choose to vote for fewer than six candidates or no candidates. All the votes you cast will be counted as long as you don't vote for too many.

Q: Can I vote for someone that is not on the ballot?

Yes. You may write-in the first and last name of the person you wish to vote for. Each contest on the ballot has a designated write-in area. Detailed instructions will be provided with your ballot. Make sure there is no other writing on your ballot.

PROCEDURES

Q: Can I vote in person?

Yes. The [Vote Centers](#) will be open on Election Day, November 7 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Q: Can I vote in-person before Election Day?

The Vote Center at City Hall will be available to [voters who need assistance](#) completing their ballot beginning October 16. Trained election staff and specialized equipment are available to help voters with disabilities cast a private, independent ballot. The accessible equipment is available at City Hall during normal business hours prior to Election Day and from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

Q: How do I know whether you received my ballot?

If you're worried about the city not receiving your ballot on time, you can fill out a provisional ballot at a Vote Center on Election Day.

Q: Can someone help me vote my ballot?

Yes. If you need assistance, you have three options:

1. Ask a trusted friend or family member for assistance.

Anyone can help you except:

- A candidate on your ballot

- Your employer or anyone who represents your employer
- An officer or representative of your union

The person helping you may:

- Mark the ballot after you tell them who to vote for
- Sign the oath by printing your name followed by their initials. Please see instructions included in your ballot packet for more information.

The person helping you must complete and sign the Certification of Person Assisting Voter form included with your ballot packet and may not try to influence your choices. The completed Certification of Person Assisting Voter form must be returned with your postage-paid return envelope.

2. Seek assistance from trained election staff at City Hall.

Assistance is available at City Hall from 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday beginning on Monday, October 16 and from 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, November 7.

3. Use the accessible ballot marking device at the Vote Center at City Hall.

The accessible ballot marking device will be available at City Hall from 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday beginning on Monday, October 16, and from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, November 7.

Voters may mark their ballots privately and independently using a ballot marking device. These devices have a variety of accessibility options including audio, large font, color contrast, touch screen input and tactile input to assist voters in marking a ballot. The machines print out a scannable, marked ballot that the voter can review. The ballot is then placed in an envelope and dropped in a ballot box with other ballots. Ballots are verified and processed at the secure processing center, like every other ballot returned through the mail or at a drop box. Accessible ballot marking devices are easy to use, and election staff will be available to assist voters.

Ballots created using the ballot marking device are treated like all other ballots cast in person; they are scanned (to create an electronic record in case something happens to the physical ballot), secured, and delivered to the Tabulation Center to be counted once the polls close.

Q: When is the latest I can turn in my completed ballot?

Your ballot must be cast at a Vote Center or received at City Hall no later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Be sure to account for postal delivery time if you submit your ballot by mail. To avoid mailing time, you can always place your ballot in the signed, postage-paid return envelope, in a drop box, or vote in-person on Election Day at a Vote Center.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Q: What if I don't get a ballot packet in the mail?

If you have not received your ballot packet by October 20, contact us at 240-314-8286 to request a replacement ballot.

Q: What if a friend or another household member doesn't get a ballot packet in the mail?

If you know someone that you think should have received a ballot packet, but did not, have the person contact City Hall at 240-314-8286 to request a replacement ballot.

Q: What if I make a mistake, spill something, or otherwise mess up my ballot?

If you need to request a replacement ballot or envelope, a new one must be issued through the City Clerk's Office. Please contact us at 240-314-8286 to request a replacement ballot.

Q: I mailed in my ballot, but as of Election Day morning, ballot tracking shows it has not been received.

You can vote provisionally at a Vote Center on Election Day. Voting provisionally means you can complete and submit a ballot that will be counted if the one you mailed does not arrive by 8:00 p.m.

Q: What if I change my mind after I mail in my ballot or put it in a drop box?

Once your completed, signed ballot is submitted, it is final. We are unable to issue you another ballot or allow you to make changes to the submitted ballot.

Q: What can I do if I put my ballot in the mail or a drop box and realize that I forgot to sign it?

Contact us at 240-314-8286. We can locate every ballot within the secure counting center.

- If we have received your ballot, we will retrieve your ballot and let you know if it's missing a signature.
- If your ballot has not yet been received and you are out of town, we can send a replacement ballot. If we received your first ballot and it was signed, that ballot will count. If you forgot to sign your first ballot, the second ballot will count.

Provided we have contact information, we will attempt to call a voter that forgets to sign the voter oath on the reply envelope and offer an opportunity to remedy the issue.

Q: What is a provisional ballot? What does it mean to vote provisionally?

A provisional ballot is issued when we are not able to determine a voter's eligibility on the spot and additional research is needed. Provisional ballots are issued when a voter uses Same-Day Registration (because the voter has not yet been verified), when our records do not show a Rockville address for the individual or when a voter comes to a Vote Center because the voter does not remember whether they signed the voter's oath on the ballot envelope.

We do not want to deny any eligible voter the right to cast a ballot. However, we want to make sure that no eligible voter casts more than one ballot.

Q: If I submit a provisional ballot and then my mailed-in ballot is received, which one counts?

If your mailed-in ballot arrives after 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, the provisional ballot will count. If, however, your mailed-in ballot arrives by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, the mailed-in ballot will be counted.

Q: Do you count all ballots, even provisional ballots, if the contests are not close enough for the votes to change the outcome?

Yes. Every vote counts! Therefore, we count every vote *provided that all election requirements* are met.

Q: Can a friend or family member drop off my ballot?

Yes. Your ballot envelope must be signed and sealed.

Q: Can someone else pick up a replacement ballot for me?

Yes. You may designate someone to be your agent. You will need to complete the Designation of Agent form for a replacement ballot. You may download the [Designation of Agent form](#) or obtain it from City Hall.